

Tape #16

Ellen "Ella" Siddoway

Date: 21 February 1978

Mrs. Ella Siddoway of 188 South 100 West on this 21st day of February, 1978. This is Diedra Northern of the Golden Age Center, Vernal, Utah.

Ella: I didn't think maybe you'd want names in there, do you want names in it?

Diedra Northern (DN): Oh, you bet, anything is fine.

Ella: When you copy it over, then you can cut a lot of it off. Well, my father was Edward Jones Young, Sr., and my mother was Esther Dunster Young. Esther Dunster, that was her maiden name, then she married Papa. They were married in the Endowment House, I don't know whether you want that in there or not. They had three children before they come to Vernal. They had Edward Jones, Jr., and Esther Marie, and Erma Harriett. They were here about a year and I was born. They come to Vernal before that, though.

DN: What did your father do when he came to Vernal?

Ella: Well, I should have told you that before. After they had these three children and they lived in Salt Lake a year, then they decided—his father had sheep—and so his father decided that he should take a herd of sheep to Vernal. So, they brought a herd of sheep. Then there was a brother-in-law and a brother and they were sheepmen and they came to Vernal at the same time. That used to take Father away from home a lot of the time.

Then they were in Vernal about a year and I was born, and my name was Ellen Paige Young. So that left my mother in the home a lot of the time. We lived about a mile from Vernal, about three-quarters of a mile from the old Hatch corner down to Ashley Creek. We lived down there and a lot of times there would be these hoodlums, outlaws. They had their hideouts over in Brown's Park and that was the only road through there that was open; and they had to pass our place to go that way.

DN: Did you see a lot of the outlaws?

Ella: Only at night when they'd come past our home. Then they would holler and shoot and carry on going past our home. So Mother would be awfully frightened, and, of course, that made we children all frightened too. When we were children, the Indians used to come—they didn't do for Indians like they do for them now. They used to always come and beg. If we were out playing or anything, we'd run to the house as fast as we could go, frightened of the Indians, but they always would come begging.

DN: What did they beg for?

Ella: Biscuits, anything that we could give them. Mother would always have bread or something, and they'd have sacks and put their bread in it. So then, I don't know, we had quite a bit of

ground there. We had pigs and sheep and raised our own gardens. Daddy planted our trees, apple trees, and we had raspberries and blueberries and a cherry tree. Mother did all our canning. She'd do a lot of canning in summer for our home use, then she'd do a lot for the sheep camp, for my father to take to the sheep camp. We used to go buffalo berry [picking]. I don't know if you've seen these trees down here, they're kind of a yellowish looking tree. Well, there were buffalo berries on that.

DN: And you used to pick them, huh?

Ella: We used to put down a canvas or a tarp or something, then we'd get hold of a limb like this and pull it over, then we'd beat it, and beat them off. We would take maybe a washtub, wash boiler, we used to have boilers, and we'd take a bunch of boilers and fill those with berries and Mother would make jam and jelly from that. That was an awful lot of work to get those all cleaned up and ready to make jelly.

My father soon built an ice house. They used to cut ice down here. Of course, you don't know where Calder's Pond is. Calder's is where they used to have a creamery down there. There was a big pond and they'd cut ice every fall. And so Father built an ice house. Then we had our ice. Father would bring a mutton down from the mountain so that we'd have our meat and we'd have our ice in there. This ice was all, oh, what do you call it? I can't say what you put in there on the ice to keep it from melting...sawdust. So we could store our meat in there.

They finally bought a ice cream freezer. Then Mother used to make our ice cream; and lots of times people would come to our home to get some ice, ask them if they can have some ice or something. When they'd ask for ice, then they'd want to borrow our ice cream freezer, because, I guess we were the only ones that had the ice cream freezer in the valley. I guess we were the first ones that had an ice cream freezer.

After I was two years old and three months or something, there was another sister was born. Then we had a brother. That sister's name was Mary, Mary D. Then we had a brother come, no, then we had another sister come, and her name was Jasmine. Then after that we had a brother come and his name was Seymore Dow. Then our last brother was Theodore Maeser.

We had quite a bit of ground and we had a pasture there, we always had cows and our chickens and of course there were two girls older than I was, and my brothers didn't have anybody. We didn't have any neighbor, we had one neighbor, but they were just a couple, just an older couple. So after I got older, then I used to help my brothers do the chores, so I learned to milk cows. I milked cows and I done chores and everything that had to be done, I done it.

We always had a big pasture, and in the summertime we would pick flowers and gather watercress. One winter, there used to be a stream run through this pasture we had, and it always froze over. But my brother and I were sleigh riding and there used to be an incline down a little hill or something. We were going down this hill, then you could go right over the stream of ice where it froze. So we were riding down there and the ice broke. It was real cold before we reached home.

When we used to go gather these buffalo berries and things, our aunts, we had two aunts, and they'd go too, along with their children. Then we always fixed a lunch and we always had our lunch down there and make a regular happy day out of it, families and their children. My grandfather and grandmother, of course, lived in Salt Lake. Once a year we would travel to Salt Lake City. We would have a wagon and team and after a while, then, we had a white-topped

buggy. We always had a buggy so that some of us could ride in that. Mother used to always can food out there to my grandmother's and she'd can fruit and dry fruit and have enough for our home and to send to the sheep camp.

At our home, there was a time for breakfast. Our chairs were turned with their backs to the table for prayer and we had prayer at night. We rode horses to school until it was too cold, then someone would take us in a buggy. We always used to, at night, we had a coal stove, of course, and we used to have bricks. We used to put bricks down in our oven and by morning all those bricks would be nice and warm. Then we had a white-topped buggy and they'd put a quilt or something down in there and we'd sit in there and cover us up with another quilt and in there was lovely and warm.

DN: Those bricks would keep you warm?

Ella: The bricks would keep us warm to go to school. I think I've told you about all I've got wrote down. I was just reading this a little bit before you come, and I thought, "Land, I think I could write a little bit more to this." I think I give you about everything I've got here, if it's any good.

DN: Was sheep quite a profitable business?

Ella: Oh yes, there was ever so many herds of sheep on the mountain at that time, and later on there were more sheep come in. When my youngest brother was born, Mother was sick. She wasn't able to nurse him, so I had an aunt that lived way off the other way. Maybe you know where the old Siddoway home is right straight down the street there?

DN: Yes I do.

Ella: Well, my aunt, Mrs. Siddoway, lived there. Then right across the street was another home, and that was another sister, a Mrs. Pack lived there. She had a baby about the same age as my mother's baby, and she used to come up to our home about once a day and nurse him. Then my sister, Rae, would get him on cocoa. She'd just make this cocoa and put it in his bottle and feed him it, and that's what he was raised on. So Mother was sick from then on and she died. She died the 21st of November, no, that was Grandpa, that's Grandpa that died. My mother died the 18th of March, I don't know if I've got the year she died or not. I think she was only about forty-seven when she died.

DN: Were there very many epidemics?

Ella: Mother died March 18, 1907. Yes, we had diphtheria, we had smallpox. When I was eight years old I had typhoid fever. That's about all about my father and mother. After Mother died I was eighteen, and so then we had a ranch way off in Naples that we lived. We had sold this home down here and we had gone down there on our ranch. Before that, my grandmother, after my grandfather died, they moved my grandmother out here. She came out here in 1895, I think it was. No, she came to Vernal in 1897. My brother, Eddy, went on a mission to New Zealand. I don't see when he went on his mission to New Zealand.

DN: Can you remember the Depression?

Ella: Yes, that's after I was married, though, the Depression came.

DN: What was it like?

Ella: Well, it was hard times.

DN: How did the people manage?

Ella: I'll tell you. We had raised a garden and my husband had dug a cellar down in the ground, then put a roof over it, or put boards over it, I guess, and a place so that we could go down in it, just a lid that we could raise up. We had a garden that year and we had carrots, and our potatoes.

DN: There wasn't any money, was there, in circulation?

Ella: Not very much, I'll tell you. It was darn hard to get a job or anything else. Of course, there was a lot of men that was on PWA, they called it, but my husband never was on PWA.

DN: You made it, then, through the Depression just by your farm?

Ella: No, we didn't have a farm, we were just renting at that time. We just had a little place for a garden. That was after my mother had died and I was married. I married when I was nineteen.

DN: Did you go to the Academy?

Ella: I started to the Academy, but I didn't finish. That was before I was married, of course, the Academy was. So I didn't get to go. My mother was sick and my two sisters had got married, so... But the Depression was after we were married. After we were married, we went up to the power plant where they installed the place, well, first they dug a big, I was going to say a dam, but it wasn't a dam, it was a big ditch that carried the water from the canyon down to come down into our plant where my husband worked up there while we were married. He installed the first... These are the big wheels that turned around and there's a switchboard. He turned the first electric light in Vernal.

DN: What was that like?

Ella: To see the light down in Vernal? We lived up the power plant so we had light, but that was about eleven miles, I guess, from Vernal. We'd just have to come down, we had a white-topped buggy, we'd come down about once a month and get our supplies. That's all my husband worked up there before we were married, he helped to build this canal, then it come down a great big hill, or mountain, into the plant. It turned those wheels, see.

DN: How long did he work up there at the power plant?

Ella: He worked on the ditch, building this big canal, before we were married. After we were married, we were up there ten years, we lived there ten years. We had two boys born up there. One boy born in Vernal at my grandmother's home, and two boys was born up to the power plant.
DN: What did your husband do after you moved down to Vernal?

Ella: Odd jobs.